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Where's Walter?
Explore Sir Sam's on page 5

Meet the authors
A new series by Janet Trull on Page 11

Heat Bank help
Find out how you can make a difference on page 7

Tilley, a Bernese mountain dog mix from Haliburton, shows off her smile in the fall leaves. /EMILY STONEHOUSE Staff

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Writing on the Senior Side

Hi Ho, Silver, away

GAIL STELTER
Special to *County Life*

"Come on Gates, let's get ready. He'll be here soon."

Out came my plaid shirt, blue jeans with fold-up cuffs, silver guns, and holster. My flat feet were housed in big, ugly brown leather shoes with laces. I didn't like wearing them, but they were okay for this: they almost looked like cowgirl boots. Mom combed my blond hair and the curls. I had straight hair, so where did the curls come from? Oh, yes, I remember sitting on the toilet and trying to sit still while my mom used leftover bits from her Toni home perm to curl the ends of my hair. Where was my cowgirl hat? I think mom wanted me to leave it off for the picture. The man, the photographer with the real horse, was making his way up Smithfield Drive. I was going to have my picture taken. Everyone would know I was a real cowgirl. The horse was not too big, and I was just little, a perfect fit. Maybe it was a pony, and I was about four years old.

The pony was beautiful. I imagined riding off to join the posse to find the bank robbers. I imagined I was Dale Evans. Roy Rogers and I were out for a ride. I imagined I was a sharpshooter like Annie Oakley. Did you know that Annie Oakley started shooting animals for food at the age of eight, which she sold to restaurants to help provide money for her family? Her sharpshooting skills were discovered when she competed against a gentleman named Frank Butler and won. Frank became her husband, and soon they were travelling the country, showing off her shooting skills in the popular Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show.

I loved that picture. I still love it but where is it? I know I have it somewhere. Sometimes living on the senior side and not being able to find stuff is a little frustrating. I wanted to see the picture and share it with you. I wondered if the photographer with the horse ever came to your street.

If he didn't, I'm guessing you still played cowboys and cowgirls. Did you chase the bad guys and put them in jail? Perhaps you climbed trees and garage roofs. We made our own bows and arrows and shot them from Mary's garage roof into Marsha's backyard at imaginary outlaws.

Bows and arrows were also perfect for Robin Hood and Little John. Oh, there may have been a few times when I identified with Maid Marion but senior siders you must agree that Robin Hood was so much more fun. We sang:

Robin Hood, Robin Hood, Riding through the Glen.
Robin Hood, Robin Hood, with his band of men,
Feared by the bad, loved by the good
Robin Hood, Robin Hood…
Now about those bows and arrows:

We didn't tell Susan's dad that the young bushes in his backyard had the perfect curve for a bow and, I certainly didn't tell my mother I was climbing on the garage roofs. For my younger readers, the garages were not attached to the houses. They were separate buildings at the very back of the driveways.

The bow needed to be skinned. My dad gave me his pen knife and the green bark was peeled away. I put notches in the end and tired on the rope, keeping it taught. Next, we hunted for arrows. These branches or sticks had to be straight, absolutely straight. The arrows were also stripped of their bark. A point of sorts was whittled on one end and a notch dug into the other. I suppose there were kids on our street whose parents bought them bows and arrow sets but most of us just made our own and now, look at us, we have that amazing experience tucked away in our childhood memories.

You will note that there is no mention of dolls in my imagination play world. I did have one once; didn't play with it and when its head came off, I was done. Kathleen who lived across the street had a room full of beautiful dolls and stuffed toys, so I guess it was just me. Maybe the boys, namely my brother, were a big influence. No matter what, my imagination games with friends and when I was alone were the best.

I am not so self-centred to think we are the only generation to play imagination games but sometimes I wonder: I don't see many kids outside playing; I know they like their video games, *Dog Man, Captain Underpants,* Marvel Super Heroes and Lego. These are the fuel for their play. This is not unlike our use of those early TV shows.

"Mommy, Dad come quick. I think Peter is dying."

Peter was not dying, just hurting in a few places.

The creek was their imagination place and that day Peter had decided that he was Evel Knievel and was jumping the creek on his bike. He didn't make it. I will venture to say that bike jumping the creek is still one of his favourite childhood memories. (Years later, when he went bungee jumping off a mountain in Switzerland I reminded him of our conversation about not doing things that if you lose you die.)

I believe; well, I hope, imaginative outdoor play is still going strong.

This leads me to the question: what do seniors do to spark their imaginations and keep their minds active? Do we still play imagination games? At first consideration, you may think no but I am here to remind you that you can. You may need to alter the physical nature of your imaginative play and you may need to think outside the box in terms of how these activities keep your mind flourishing and your imagination thriving. You may need a concrete game to release that imagination. Here are a few ways that may work.

Read novels and short stories and watch movies. Enjoy and then sit back and relive them with you as the main character. Which character are you, and what would you do differently?

Go to the theatre for live shows and performances and your mind will be hornswoggled into the world in front of you.

Share your life stories and your childhood games with friends and family. Have a story circle each time your group or family comes together. Story starters like your favourite TV show when you were ten; or, how about Saturday afternoons at the movies; or the horror movies of our youth … etc.

Be creative: write, paint, build something, sing and dance. These can be counted to spark the imagination.

Charades, puzzles, pictionary, card games, trivia games, name that tune.

Croquet, bocce, bowls, badminton, pickle ball and golf.

Plan and plant a garden or a flower window box.

I know so much of this seems obvious and you may be wondering why I wanted to write about it. Well, I want to remind you of what a wonderful imagination life we had in the 50s and 60s and encourage you to keep all those memories up front and enjoy them over again. But, it's not just for those of us living on the senior side. I want the children of yesterday, today and tomorrow to use their imaginations to bring joy, energy and new experiences to their worlds. (This sounds a little "heavy' and even corny but it is my hope.)

Hi Ho, Silver, away!

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Haliburton Home Hardware Building Centre's October Artist feature, the Haliburton Paddle Shop.

Haliburton Home Hardware Building Centre employee Carther Mitchell stands before the Artist of the Month display with the Paddle Shop owners Corey Pietryszyn and Maria Paterson. /Submitted

Haliburton Home Hardware Building Centre is proud to feature the October artist of the month, the Haliburton Paddle Shop.

At the Haliburton Paddle Shop (HPS), we pride ourselves on creating hand crafted, sustainable premium wooden paddles for canoeing, kayaking, and stand-up paddle boarding (SUP). We also use our leftover wood to create several styles of paddle holders, charcuterie boards, and other products. Located in the beautiful Haliburton, Ontario, our shop is dedicated to producing high-quality, custom products that combine functionality, durability and artistry.

Corey Pietryszyn has been the current paddle maker for the last four years and recently in February 2024 took over ownership of the Paddle Shop with his partner, Maria Paterson. Corey has a long history of craftsmanship and outdoor adventure. Knowing what a paddle should be like in the water, Corey works on creating balance and flex in his wooden paddles. This ensures a smooth recovery phase of your stroke and establishes a harmonious, ergonomic connection between your hands and the paddle for seamless control.

Whether you're navigating the waterways with one of our paddles in hand or admiring it as a piece of art on your wall, Corey and Maria want you to feel connected – to the craftsmanship, to the natural materials, and to the spirit of adventure that inspired its creation.

Submitted

/LAURA SMITH Staff

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HCDC AGM highlights community growth

EMILY STONEHOUSE
County Life Editor

A meeting with some hellos and some goodbyes. Haliburton County Development Corporation's (HCDC) annual general meeting was held on Oct. 4 at the still shiny Link building off County Road 21.

Following a land acknowledgement, Warden Liz Danielsen kicked off the meeting, bringing greetings from county council members. "What you have done for our economy," said Danielsen, referencing the hard work of staff and board members of HCDC, "is something that should definitely be applauded."

To dive right into numbers, Tim Degeer of Dawson Gray provided news of a clean audit, and once again gave credit to Patti Tallman, the executive director of HCDC, and the team of staff who keep the numbers running smoothly.

Tallman, who was present via zoom due to COVID-19 exposure, presented on this past year's statistics, with 121 businesses assisted and in-depth counselling services offered, 90 referrals, and 309 jobs created/maintained through HCDC support. "Collaboration is key," said Tallman. "I'd like to acknowledge the hard work of the staff. I'm really blessed to have the best team."

Sara Joanu, the loans officer, followed Tallman for a progress report. She noted that over the past year, HCDC received 73 loan applications, where 53 were approved, 13 were withdrawn, and seven were declined.

Noting that the numbers are up to a year end of March 31, 2024, Joanu shared that the total dollars dispersed within the community were $6,559,589 at an average interest rate of 8.2 per cent, and a total value of investment portfolio landing at $22,536,548. "I am confident in our ability to make a positive difference in Haliburton County," she said.

The loans were split up by sector for those to see, with the service sector comprising the largest piece of the pie at 49.4 per cent. These services include restaurants, landscaping, hair salons, accounting, and auto repair.

Other loan sectors from HCDC include construction, making up 12.6 per cent of their portfolio, tourism at 13.1 per cent, manufacturing at 8.4 per cent, retail at 8.1 per cent, forestry at 5.8 per cent, and not for profits holding 2.6 per cent of the portfolio.

Out of the 73 loans from the past fiscal year, 44.1 per cent went into maintenance, 29.4 per cent into expansion, and 26.5 into start up costs.

The interest from the loans given out into the community is used to directly fund community economic development (CED) initiatives from HCDC, and Elisha Barlowe, the programs and operations coordinator for HCDC, dove into the many CED programs HCDC oversaw this past year.

With $233,000 funds leveraged, the CED department of HCDC developed six strategic plans, involved 29 community partners, and recruited 79 volunteers.

Many have heard of the local initiatives program, or LIP, which, based on interest levels from community loans, had an impact of $174,973 this past year. This equated to 25 projects, 30 partners, $70,000 dispersed, $104,973 in leveraged funds, and $104,009 in-kind contributions.

While the numbers were delivered and the team applauded for another successful year, it was time to say goodbye to one of HCDC's longest serving directors.

Barb Bolin joined the corporation in 1995 as a member of the CED committee. "Her passion for community economic development has played a vital role in many of our achievements in the area," said Cory Abbs, the loan administrator for HCDC. Bolin has been the chair for both the CED committee, as well as the investment committee at different times, and worked tirelessly to provide funding and relief for countless local businesses. "Barb's unwavering dedication to both our community and the corporation will be remembered for years to come," said Abbs.

Bolin's role will be filled by Nancy Wright-Laking, which was approved by the board of directors at the meeting.

The AGM was closed off by Warden Liz Danielsen, who used her closing remarks as an opportunity to shed some light on recent developments from county council; namely, the recently adopted municipal accommodation tax (MAT). This tax is associated with short term rentals, and is split equally between the county and the lower tiers. The county uses their percentage for any upcoming tourism initiative, and each municipality can use their allocation as they see fit.

"The bylaws have all been passed and are in place," said Danielsen.

The warden was asked whether the taxes will impact the overall tourism budget, to which she replied "that's not the plan," noting she sees the MAT as an opportunity to improve county tourism initiatives overall.

Considering the tax is a newly proposed regulation, Danielsen could not speak to the exact amount that would be received year over year.

Danielsen also used her time at the podium to skim the surface of the mighty conversation that is amalgamation, or, as Danielsen phrased it, "the A-word".

Amalgamation has been a hot topic for countless years; with a teetering back and forth between those for and against the amalgamation of upper and lower tier government models. In an attempt to gain some clarity, county council recently completed a service delivery review; a glimpse into which services lie where, and who holds the onus.

Danielsen reported that the review, which is available online for public viewing, was quite simply, too much. "We aren't all on the same page," she said. "It's overwhelming."

She believes that streamlining these services, for now, is too big a task to take on. "Right now, there are lakes that have different rules from one end to the other," she said. "We need to make sure everyone in the county knows the rules, and I think we can do that without the 'A-word'."

That being said, Danielsen confirmed that she is committed to continuing to have the conversations around amalgamation. "I will encourage open discussions and a willingness to all move in the same direction," she said.

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Jen Burns-West Chief Nursing Executive & VP Clinical and Community Support Services, Haliburton Highlands Health Services

Christine Keenan, Project Coordinator, Kawartha Lakes Haliburton Ontario Health Team

Lauren Wilson, Pharmacist/Owner, Pharmasave

Chris Parish, Commander Clinical Programs, Haliburton County Paramedic Service

Kim Ballantyne, Senior Manager, Patient Services, Home and Community Care Support Services

Sir Sam's hiking and biking trails

I DON'T HAVE many fall decorations. I prefer the gifts that nature provides at this time of year. I cut my massive hydrangea flowers and arrange them in baskets and vases. I love the pumpkins with their unique shapes that always remind me of childhood joy and the anticipation of dress-up and sweet treats. However, the one decoration that I have hauled out every year for the past 15 to 20 years is a set of 11 wooden blocks, that when arranged spell *give thanks* with a little leaf block in between the two words. I always put these blocks out, as I like the demand it places on everyone who is caught reading the message. I feel like it is reminding us to step up and acknowledge the gifts that are often taken for granted. Sometimes in our busy lives, important things get overlooked, like the natural beauty of the season, the abundance of the harvest, and the relationships that make us feel connected, appreciated and loved.

KAREN PHIPPS
Walter & Me

One would think it is easy to give thanks, but it is harder than it sounds. In the rush of everyday life, the ordinary, the extraordinary and the beautiful moments sometimes get lost. Often it is not until many years have passed, when you look back and remember with fondness, what seemed like a mundane task at the time. In response to these letters shouting out at me each time I enter and exit my home, I have been trying to remind myself to be present, to be thankful and to slow down.

One of my biggest obstacles to a thankful life, a life resplendent with gratitude, is a busy life. My problem is that when life gets too busy, I find it very difficult to be my best self.

Lately, I have been feeling like a grumpy pet mom. My life has been busy and Walter does nothing to make it a little easier. He doesn't seem to notice that it is really dark at 6:30 in the morning, he doesn't care if he pulls so hard that my arms and shoulders ache, he forgets that passing cars aren't his mortal enemy regardless of being bribed, reasoned with, and cajoled with the use of positive and negative reinforcement. He just is who he is and he can be really annoying.

I know that my angst with Walter is usually not really about Walter but rather with a lack of balance in my own life. Yes, he is frustrating at times, and annoying most of the time but he is a spirit that shines bright. When we are in the car together on our regular trips to doggie daycare or our next hike, we share quiet time where I feel his trust in me, I see in his eyes his attachment to me and I feel protective, connected and thankful he is in my life. His nose prints are all over the passenger side of the windshield and side window, his muddy paw prints are all over the upholstery and dog hair is tightly woven into the fabric of the seats. While I do appreciate that I now have someone to blame for my messy car, I also know that part of me really values this time we have together. Walter reminds me that love isn't neat and orderly. It's often chaotic and messy with lots of conflicting emotions.

In the spirit of the season, Walter and I sought out more vistas in the county this week. This led us to Sir Sam's hiking Trails in Eagle Lake. Because one of us lacks social skills and one of us has an annoyingly loud bark, I try to hike during off times where the possibility of coming into contact with others is less likely. So, in keeping with our preferred practices, we arrived at Sir Sam's on a Monday afternoon. The parking lot was empty and Walter and I were the only ones on the trails. Not sure where to begin, we walked toward a large information board that showed the various biking and walking trails. Attached to the board there is an honour and waiver box. The cost is $10 for biking and $5.00 per hiker. You can pay cash or snap a QR code to pay online. Along with waiver forms, there are also trail maps available.

I found the trails to be a bit confusing to follow, however it was pretty easy to just keep selecting a trail that either went up or came down. Many of the trails zigzagged across the hills making the ascent and descent fairly comfortable. There are some rocky spots but generally the trails are an easy walk. The ascent offers a spectacular view almost immediately and with each zig in the zag it gets even more glorious. I appreciated Walter's relatively gentle pulling up the path as it felt like having a tow rope. I am never completely at peace when walking Walter and was a bit concerned that the holes in the hills were carved out by groundhogs and was a bit worried that one may run across the field prompting my very quick descent at any time. Fortunately all creatures remained nicely tucked away and we completed the trail unscathed.

Once at the top, the view is truly spectacular. Recently opened is a 60 foot Eagle View Tower and Observation Deck that provides a 450 foot view above Eagle and Moose Lakes. From this vantage point, it is easy to be thankful for so many things - To live here, to call this place home, to be surrounded by the rugged beauty that seems endless, to be standing in the middle of a picture perfect postcard, to see the joy of life in my walking buddy, to be on the trails together and sharing a moment in time.

When I think about the notion of giving thanks and the deeper purpose of such a demand, I wonder why it really matters. From the top of the hill, I thought it's not about giving thanks for the material things in life but rather life itself, all life. I can't forget the sadness and sorrow of many at the moment, I can't forget the hate and hurt that is a reality in the world, but I can be thankful that beauty exists, that love perseveres and that joy and resilience can live anywhere.

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Sharing women's history

KATE BUTLER
Special to *County Life*

You might recall that in last week's paper, I mentioned that October marks Women's History Month in Canada. Have you discovered any stories of women from our community's history or your own family's history that have inspired you? If you're looking to find out more about women's history in the Haliburton Highlands, I would, of course, suggest visiting our community's museums, but the preservation of our community's stories has also been made possible by the work of local authors, many of them women. One of the most prominent who springs to mind is Nila Reynolds. Her research, completed in the 1950s and 1960s was extensive and spanned eight years, including 170 interviews with local residents and former residents. Being completed in the era in which it was meant that Nila's research had a much more immediate link with the stories of early settlers of the Haliburton Highlands. Today, many of those stories are still certainly passed down through families, but at a further remove, while others might have been lost completely, if Reynolds hadn't captured them when she did. Something else I find fascinating is the fact that her research, which eventually became a book entitled *In Quest of Yesterday*, was also shared in the pages of the *Echo* over the course of 21 months in the early 1960s. I'm certain that at the time it generated a sense of community pride, but also a huge excitement for that next installment when it hit the newsstands. While Nila Reynolds' book is certainly a reflection of the era in which it was written and needs to be read as such, her work gives us an insight into the lives of early settlers, including women, to which we might not otherwise have access, and which other historians have been able to build on and draw from in the intervening decades.

Perhaps, as the autumn evenings draw in, you might feel in the mood to explore some local history in book form. The Haliburton County Public Library and our local bookstores are wonderful spots to pick up these sorts of reads if you don't already have them to hand. Within their pages, you'll find tales of women's history, such as the story Sarah Potts. Her husband worked for the Victoria Railway for many years, but Sarah travelled around the community in all conditions and all types of weather, sharing her skills as a midwife and ensuring that many babies who might not have otherwise survived would be able to thrive. At the same time, she was also, of course, providing comfort and reassurance to new mothers who might be far from their own families.

Another tale which might catch your eye is that of Annie Heard. Her husband, Alexander MacDonald was the second reeve of Dysart, but he passed away in 1891, leaving Annie with four children under the age of eleven. Annie was a skilled tailor however, having trained with companies in Port Hope and Peterborough. In an era before ready to wear clothing was widely available in shops, the skills of a tailor were in high demand, enabling Annie to provide for her family. Her two daughters, May and Nellie, trained as teachers, at the Model School in Minden, eventually taking teaching positions in Haliburton County.

Haliburton County's history is filled with stories of women's history that can speak to us across the decades, though they can often be hidden just below the surface. Let's share and celebrate as many of these as we can this Women's History Month!

Top 10 things to be thankful for at Thanksgiving

NOW THAT Thanksgiving is over, I think it's a good time to review the things we are all thankful for. I'm sure you have your own list, but here are the 10 most common things people are thankful for.

1. It's the last you'll see or hear of tofurkey for a while.
2. You didn't have to sit beside anyone who insisted on showing you 300 photos of their road trip to Newark.
3. This year they checked the temperature of the bird with the right thermometer.
4. Last year's boiled turkey fiasco made you ineligible to help in the kitchen.
5. You got to work out some major issues mashing the potatoes.
6. No blood drawn in heated argument over who makes the best stuffing.
7. Thanks to Siri, the Yam/Sweet potato debate was finally laid to rest.
8. Grandpa fell asleep before he was able to tell you just how lucky you are – which, ironically, is another example of just how lucky you are.
9. You had the foresight to wear the belt with three extra holes.
10. You were able to get that last piece of pumpkin pie by telling your paranoid uncle that Bill Gates put a tracking device in it.

STEVE GALEA
Humour Columnist

Leave taking

Flames of leaves, flickering on their trees,
licking the skin of River that flows below, their reflections quivering as Wind blows across it,
carrying leaves along its current, sparks of burnt orange and russet and red, smearing Air,
that crackles with the cackles of crows, conversing in the crowns of willows,
their tresses drooping over the River,
late afternoon Sun bathing them in golden light, as I stand on the riverbank between two willows,
gawking up at the flight of geese, flying so high, up there, the trees must appear tiny as matchsticks,
their leaves igniting the riverbank, as the geese fly above them, dozens of wings forming three Vees,
merging into one,
their honks clashing with the caws of crows, cowering in the willows, as I watch the geese, perfectly aligned,
flapping their wings across the runway of Sky, wondering whether this is their leave taking,
winging towards warmer climes, while the rest of us remain behind, inhaling Wind that chafes our cheeks,
feasting on leaves as they flicker on their trees, sunlight gilding their crowns,
before the leaves loosen and flutter to the ground, or land in the River, far from their roots,
carried by its current, past the shrunken colonies of lily-pads and the yellowing reeds,
towards wherever they will rest,
the crows in the willows serenading them as they float past the trees, rooted to the riverbank,
Wind, sweeping through them, seizing leaves, as I peer back up into the blankness of Sky,
the flecks of geese faded from sight, their honks swallowed by all that blue, and I quietly wish them
well on their flight,
a pair of seagulls flapping into view, crossing over the River, flying above the gleaming crowns of trees,
wondering where they rest when their wings wilt, or when the weather turns cold
and the inferno of leaves crumples to ash on the ground, the sound of their squawks making me grin,
as they drown the screeches of the crows, flapping out of the willows, the gloss of their wings,
polished by Sun,
as they fly through Air, so low, I hear the whoosh of their wings, breaths of Wind blowing gusts
across the River,
as the reflections of trees wobble in the water, my eyes, mesmerized by the colours rippling across its surface,
a parade of leaves floating along the River, like the Vees of geese, flying, somewhere, up in Sky,
as Air shivers, feeling the change their leave taking brings,
Wind rampaging through the trees, feasting on leaves,
as I stand on the riverbank, a matchstick amongst the trees,
inhaling Wind, then setting it free.

Sylvie Kalenda

Heat Bank seeks support in wake of overwhelming calls

THOMAS SMITH

County Life Staff

"It has been overwhelming. Absolutely overwhelming," says Tina Jackson, executive director of the Central Food Network.

This September, the Heat Bank has received a record number of calls asking for support. Last September, only seven households contacted the Heat Bank. This September, that number has increased to 20.

The Heat Bank is an initiative under the Central Food Network. They respond to calls from people requesting support in heating their homes, assisting with stopping hydro companies shutting off power, energy access to fuel and firewood, and access to legal support.

The Heat Bank is an authorized intake agency for government programs including the Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP) and the Low Income Energy Program (LEEP).

Jackson thinks that the ever-increasing cost of food and fuel has resulted in more families reaching out for help.

Customers are not allowed to have their hydro cut off after November. For customers that have already had their hydro cut off, the companies have until Dec. 1 to put their hydro back on to allow them to survive the winter. Before a house's hydro is connected, the hydro company will try to negotiate a repayment plan. If that does not work, the hydro company will begin to call. It is only after months of attempting to reach a repayment plan and contacting customers that do not pay, that they will cut off the hydro. There are special rules for low income customers.

In the spring of this year, the threshold for hydro assistance programs changed. Due to this change, Jackson says that it has caused people to lose hydro to their homes at a more accelerated rate than in previous years.

Living in urban centers in Ontario, you have gas lines that are also protected and cannot be cut off in November. Living in Haliburton County has the disadvantage of relying on oil, firewood, and other methods of heating people's houses and are not protected by the government.

Needs are assessed on a case-by-case basis. Low income is verified by the Heat Bank and they have professionals who can decide what services are best to assist you. They also offer rebates on home refurbishes and heat insulating.

"It is very hard. It depends on what each household is going through," says Jackson.

The Heat Bank is capable of temporarily navigating households away from an emergency and assisting them in making a plan and supporting people through the process.

On Nov. 10, the Rhubarb is hosting their annual fundraiser for the Heat Bank. This fundraiser is a wonderful opportunity to help the Heat Bank and eat some delicious food. In addition to this fundraiser, the Heat Bank has an online auction. They are also looking for volunteers interested in chopping and delivering firewood in the county.

"Our services are entirely confidential," says Jackson. "Everybody needs help in their lives. There is no shame in reaching out and searching for help."

For those in need of emergency assistance, would like to volunteer, or donate, please contact the Heat Bank's hotline at 705-306-0565.

Community Events

Send your event listing to classifieds@haliburtonpress.com

Recurring events

Stanhope Heritage Museum
When: Saturday 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Where: 1123 North Shore Road, Algonquin.
Discover local history at the Stanhope Heritage Museum. Our fall hours are Saturday's 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

TOPS: Take Off Pounds Sensibly
When: Monday mornings 9:30 to 11 a.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion Branch 129, upper level
Admission: Yearly membership of $59
A non-profit/commercial network of weight-loss support groups, offers programs for healthy living and weight management.

Creative Collaborations
When: Tuesdays at 1 p.m.
Where: St. George's Anglican Church. 617 Mountain Street
Join us for the Creative Collaborations craft group. Share your skills. Learn new skills. Bring your own project or work on the featured project. Tuesdays at 1 pm at St. George's Anglican Church. Beginners Welcome. Contact lynnhiggsthompson@haliburtonanglican.ca for details.

Seniors Chair Exercises
When: Thursdays at 1 p.m.
Where: St. George's Anglican Church, 617 Mountain Street
Please join us for safe and gentle exercises for seniors to help with balance, strength and flexibility. Free to join.

Lakeside Church Service
When: Sunday at 9 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.
Where: 9 Park Street, Haliburton.
Whoever you are, wherever you've been, you are welcome here.

Weekly Meat Rolls
When: Every Saturday, 3 p.m.
Where: Coboconk Legion, Hwy 48 and 35
Join us for our weekly meat draw at the Coboconk Legion. Five spins for $10. The first four rounds are for highest and lowest score with two winners per round. The last round is for a prepare-it-yourself dinner for two. Additional spins for this round are available for $2 each. Call 705-454-8127 or email info@coboconklegion.ca for more information.

Scottish Country Dancing
When: Mon. Sept. 16 from 7:15 to 9:15 p.m.
Where: Fellowship Room of Haliburton United Church 10 George St.
Beginners absolutely welcome! No experience or partner needed! Please wear clothing you can move freely in and indoor (preferably soft-soled) shoes. Classes are $10 cash/class or register for the whole term for $110 (cash or e-transfer). Email haliburtonscottishcountrydance@gmail.com for more info or to register.

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- Spacious layout with great view
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- Level lot with lots of play space
- Mostly furnished on yr-rnd pvt rd

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Broker
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haliburtonhighlands-remax.ca

11181 GULL RIVER $499,000

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jackiedhardman@gmail.com

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Deb Lambe
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705-854-0103
debra.lambe@gmail.com

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705-457-8511
lynda@lyndalitwin.ca

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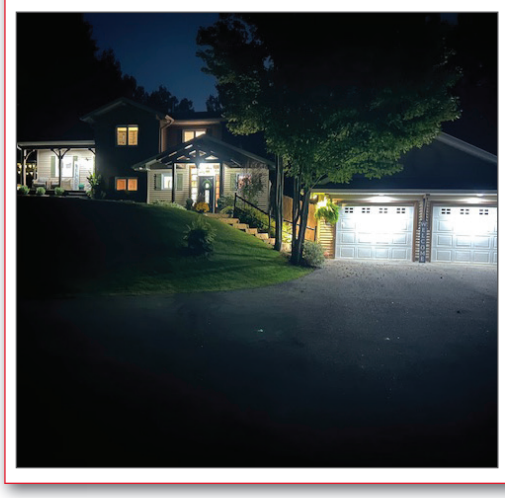

This Home features 4 bed & 2 bath. Private decks. The detached garage adds extra storage. Upgrades include: all lighting & plumbing fixtures & the hot tub; all new hardwood flooring & carpet; shingles replaced on the home & garage & a Napoleon propane stove inserted; boiler system; all window glass replaced; a new well pump & pressure tank; paved driveway, back deck & gazebo; A/C unit heat pump upstairs & downstairs, quartz countertop, farmhouse sink & kitchen appliances.

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lisa@lisamercer.ca

79 INVERGORDON AVE. MINDEN $625,000

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- 3 BR
- 2 BT
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- 24' Above ground pool
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Thirty-five years of SIRCH

EMILY STONEHOUSE
County Life Editor

Gena Robertson, the founder and executive director of SIRCH, cuts the cake to celebrate 35 years of SIRCH in the Haliburton Highlands on Oct. 1. /EMILY STONEHOUSE Staff

With sparklers on a glossy cake and shimmering balloons in the background, Gena Roberston, the executive director of SIRCH, officially celebrated 35 years of giving back to the community with SIRCH. "35 years ago, I was the only employee in a tiny little office building," she reminisced. "But it's really a team effort. It's a huge collective effort, and Haliburton County is one of the best places to make those connections."

In 1989, the Supportive Initiative for Residents in the County of Haliburton, now commonly known as SIRCH, became incorporated. Their first program was the Parent Support Services Program, designed to offer mental health services and support to parents with children up to 18 years old. "We had started with a social action committee in the area," said Robertson, "and that was about what was needed in the county. The mandate really has always been to look at where the gaps are."

Robertson noted that while it's important to face forward and look at the future of SIRCH, sometimes looking back serves an important purpose as well. "We brought in adult mental health services, community hospice, victim support services, a lot of things," she said.

Many of these programs have since been divested to Haliburton Highlands Health Services, or other community partners to take the lead, leaving room for SIRCH to move onto the next gap that needs to be filled.

Some of their other programs include but are not limited to: a women's emergency house to escape domestic violence, pregnancy support programs, nutrition and food security initiatives, bereavement groups, and employment training to name a few.

One of the programs that Robertson is most proud of is the School's Cool program, which she describes as "leveling the playing field" for kids approaching school age. "If you enter kindergarten and you are significantly behind, it's been proven that your trajectory is always going to be behind," she noted.

The program is able to prepare kids - in both an academic and social manner - for their upcoming school experience, in just a matter of weeks.

The need for the program became apparent as kids continued to grow and thrive, and before long, SIRCH was offering training at schools not only across the local county, but across the country, to ensure that all kids had a fair chance at starting out.

Robertson came up with the idea for School's Cool from her own upbringing here in Haliburton County. She recalled that when she was young, growing up in a rural community without access to transportation could be isolating, making the transition to school even more difficult.

After calling Haliburton County home for many years, Robertson moved out west, where she was "bitten by the community development bug," she said. She settled in a series of small communities across the country, where she offered support services to the rural populations, before returning to Haliburton as an adult.

Upon her arrival back in the community, she took on a position with Children's Aid Services (CAS), and was the only worker for the organization in the county. "I always said I'd never stay at a job for longer than five years, though," she laughed, as she cut the cake celebrating 35 years with SIRCH.

While Robertson started SIRCH in October 1989 and has been guiding the ship for years, she noted that there are many who make it run smoothly, Over the past 35 years, SIRCH has employed over 300 staff, and even more volunteers. "We don't do this by ourselves," said Robertson. "We always do this with partners. Donors, volunteers, local businesses, or other service clubs. It really speaks to the community we have here."

Over the past ten years, SIRCH has received 5.8 million worth of in-kind donations; including goods, services, time, and expertise. "This is an incredibly generous community,' said Robertson.

While community support and funding has been welcome, Robertson noted that there were many times over the years that SIRCH needed to get "innovative" when it came to raising funds. "Sometimes there was funding available, and sometimes there wasn't. That's when we got into social enterprise."

SIRCH works in collaboration with the Thrift Warehouse, located at Mallard Road in Haliburton. This booming business is well known to both locals and visitors alike, and has a steady stream of changing items that keeps interest piqued year-round. A portion of the proceeds from the warehouse are donated directly back to SIRCH and their programming. "When people shop at the Warehouse, it impacts us directly," said Robertson. "Every little bit helps."

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Storytellers of Haliburton County

What are you writing?

JANET TRULL

Special to *County Life*

Some kind of highland magic attracts people with creative spirits to Haliburton County. Writers, especially, are inspired by this landscape. I want to introduce you to some of them, because, like a canoe passing in the mist, they tend to pass among us unseen.

Meet Grant and Barbara Sirola, a couple who call Haliburton home after travelling widely and experiencing a variety of careers. They have lived in Timmins, Montreal, Winnipeg and now Haliburton. Grant is a Metallurgical Engineer with a master's degree in business administration. Barbara is a researcher, writer and editor. Their publications include studies of scientific and historical significance, philosophy, religion, poetry and reflection.

Way back in 1976, the couple published an ambitious work called *The Nuclear Age*. It outlines the potential for nuclear disasters and "warns of the proliferation of nuclear waste and the lethal global escalation of background radiation." The book examines the effects of radiation, including infertility and disease, as well as the decline of coral reefs, frogs and honey bees. It offers predictions of dire future outcomes.

Grant and Barbara Sirola. /Submitted

Since the 1970s, Grant and Barbara have watched their predictions become reality at Three Mile Island, Chernobyl, and Fukushima. They updated their research on The Nuclear Age with a new edition, *Repeat Performance*. Part of their investigations focus on past civilizations and the way they ended. Think of the Egyptians, Minoans, Hittites and Huns. Some were annihilated by natural disasters and planetary shifts. Others met their demise by their own misguided attempts to gain riches and real estate. The Sirolas present some surprising hypotheses juxtaposing ideas of past and future cataclysmic events that include the possibility of previous nuclear ages.

You might think the Sirolas would be overwhelmed with the burden of knowledge that human foolishness has wrought. The opposite is true. They share my opinion that writing is a good way to make sense of the world. It's best to get things out of your head and onto paper. Examining our lives and the times we are born into creates meaning. Sharing our thoughts in written form develops purpose.

Throughout their long marriage, the Sirolas have examined a variety of geographic and social perspectives. Grant has written several volumes of poetry reflecting on what it means to be Canadian, including this verse written during the Quebec Separation Referendum.

Stand tall; speak out,
and say your piece
In language of your choice.
It matters not your dialect.
What's vital is your voice.

This couple embraces both realism and optimism. They consider opinions that differ from their own. They wonder at the mysteries of consciousness, and quote from the *Desiderata*, an essay full of wisdom by Max Ehrmann - a favorite of theirs. "No doubt, the universe is unfolding as it should. With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be cheerful. Strive to be happy."

Writing is an art that requires very little investment other than pen and notebook. There are no age restrictions. That elderly wanderer you pass on a forest trail might be cooking up a murder plot. Beware the power of the pen.

In the weeks ahead, I'm going to be talking to local authors about what it takes to establish an effective writing practice. We'll share some tips and trade secrets on what it takes to get started and stay on track, whether you're writing essays, memoirs, or the great Canadian novel.

Janet Trull, Author, Instructor of Welcome to Writing, HSAD, haliburtonlake@gmail.com

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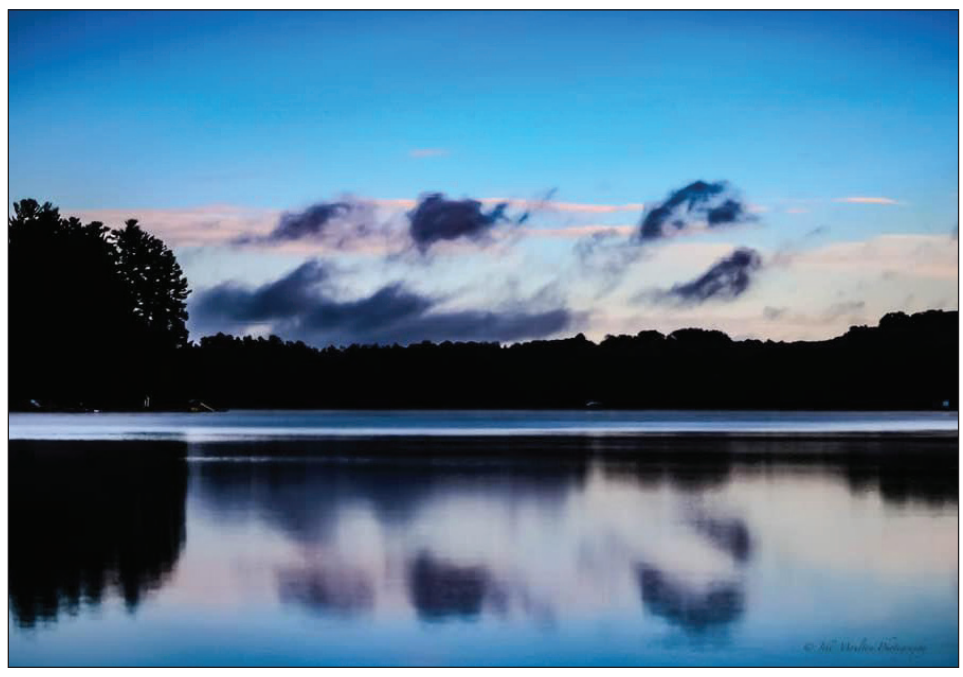
Nature in your backyard

County Life welcomes photo submissions depicting life in the Highlands. Email jennifer@ haliburtonpress.com. Please ensure images are high resolution - 200 dpi, 10 inches at its longest edge.

A curious cat /Submitted Lavdeep Jallandhra

A broad-winged hawk./ Submitted by Derek Spencer



Submitted by Jill Moulton

A pine martim. /Submitted by Tammy Nash

Legion Events

Branch 441 Kinmount

Monday: Social Cornhole 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday: Closed
Wednesday: Canteen opens at 6 p.m. with open darts to start at 7:30 p.m.
Thursday: General meeting (members) at 7:30 p.m. 3rd Thursday every month
Friday: Backyard BBQ 5 to 7 p.m.
Bingo: doors 0pen at 5:30 p.m. play starts at 6:45 p.m. $300 jackpot with a progressive $500 jackpot
Saturday: Canteen opens at 3 p.m. with meat draw to start at 5 p.m.
Sunday: Ladies Auxiliary meeting (members only) 3rd Sunday every month at 2 p.m.
Hall available to rent for any occasion, call 705-488-3462. Everyone is welcome to any events, to join our meetings then become a member. Follow our Facebook page – Royal Canadian Legion Branch 441 Kinmount. We are always posting new events. For all you ladies, join our Ladies Auxiliary, we are always looking for new faces. If you are interested, phone 705-928-7105!

Branch 129 Haliburton

Mondays: Bridge every Monday, 1 p.m. Schofield Rm.
Tuesdays: League darts 7 p.m.
Wednesdays: Bid Euchre 1 p.m. start – Main Hall. Bingo doors open at 6 p.m. Bingo starts at 7 p.m. First Wed of each month - $1000 jackpot, rest will be a $500 jackpot. Follow Facebook.com/ Branch129 Bingo for the most up-to-date information
Thursdays: General Meeting third Thursday of the month, 6:30 p.m. All members urged to attend.
Ladies Auxiliary last Thursday of the month at 1 p.m.
Fridays: Meat draw has five draws, five prizes each draw, first draw at 4:30 p.m., last draw at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are $2 per draw. Ed Pickard, MC.
Friday fun darts from 4:30 p.m. and onwards.
Saturdays: 50/50 Draw 4 p.m. draw – tickets are $1 each available in the Clubroom.
Whether you're planning a function for 10 or 200, for more information call Cheryl Waller at 905-447-7741, email haliburtonlegionrentals@gmail.com or visit haliburtonlegion.com. Come on out and support Haliburton Legion Branch 129 ... everyone is welcome!
Club room hours: Mon. 3 to 6 p.m., Tues. 3 to 9 p.m., Wed/Thurs. 3 to 6 p.m. Fri. 3 to 7 p.m. and Sat. 3 to 6 p.m.

Branch 636 Minden

Lunch - Monday to Friday
Monday: Rug Hookers every second week.
Bid Euchre 1 to 3 p.m.
Tuesday: Food 5 p.m. Canoe FM Bingo 6 p.m.
Thursday: Cribbage 1 to 3 p.m., Darts 7 to 9 p.m. and Euchre 7 to 9 p.m.
Every other Friday: Karaoke 8 to 11 p.m.
Friday Fish & Chips & Wings. Lunch 11a.m. to 2 p.m. and Dinner 4 to 7 p.m.
Saturday All Day Breakfast 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with three Meat draws at 11 a.m.
Call ahead any day for take-out: 705-286-4541
Schedules are subject to change without notice.
Check our Facebook page Minden Legion Branch 636 for more info.

Branch 624 Wilberforce

Closed Sunday and Tuesday
Monday: Darts 7 p.m. Open 6 to 10 p.m.
Wednesday: 2 to 6 p.m. Darts 2 p.m.
Thursday: Open 2 to 10 p.m. Horseshoes 7 p.m.
Saturday Meat draw Legion open 2 to 11 p.m.
For all your catering needs call the Ladies auxiliary at 705-448-2221

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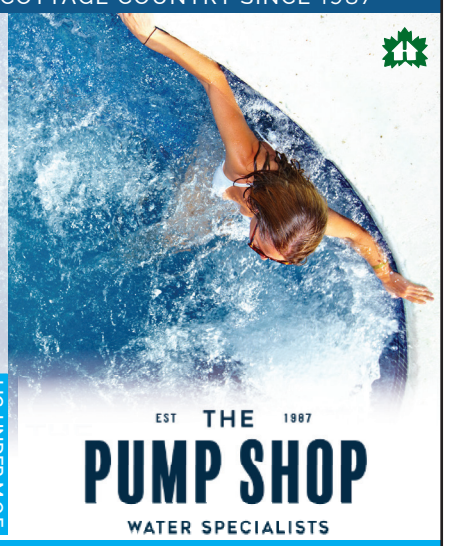

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LOOK INSIDE

Mayhem on ice

Women's hockey proving to be a popular sport in Minden these days

See page 10

Down at the dump

Dave Robertson turned the Maple Lake dump into a fascinating spectacle of eclectic found art

See page 21

In Quotes

"Do we have any lakes left?"

Algonquin Highlands reeve Eleanor Harrison

911 hits snag as signs not staying in place

by SHERYL LOUCKS
Times staff

The 911 project hit a serious snag when problems surfaced with the way signs were installed on 180 roads or a tenth of Haliburton County's roads.

Stephen Foster, 911 project co-ordinator, reported to county council last week that 911 hit "a patch of rough water" with the installation of the signs. He says the field co-ordinator for the installation of the signs was also one of the working members of one of the crews so was not able to get around constantly to check on the signs that were installed.

The company, Foster says, has taken action to rectify the problem of 1,500 signs not being put into the ground deep enough, tilting and leaning over. Foster explained there is a contractor with the project who is responsible for over-seeing that the installation is done correctly. Jim McMahon, Minden Hills deputy-reeve, said he could not understand why the county had to pay for someone "to baby-sit a firm we hired to do a job for us."

Warden Ross Rigney responded the county had agreed in the original project to hire this individual for that purpose and this was not a surprise. Dysart Reeve Murray Fearrey said he was just glad they found the problem now before the company installing the signs was paid and left the county.

Foster told council his staff members are continuing to go through the manifests for each road, which says how many signs were installed to see if there are any more prob-

see DISPATCH *page 2*

Darren Lum/TIMES

Jack-o-lantern in the making:
Tina Anderson, an Ontario early years teacher, helps Colby Bennett get a pumpkin ready for carving last Thursday at the Early Years Centre in Minden. The big night is this Friday.

Hodgson named 'Highlander'

Former MPP lauded for his service to the area

by MATTHEW WALLS
Times staff

With his retirement from politics less than a month old, former MPP Chris Hodgson is already reaping the goodwill he accumulated in his eight years serving the county at Queen's Park.

On Friday, the Chamber of Commerce, to a standing ovation, named Hodgson Highlander of the Year at its Annual General Meeting at Camp Wanakita.

Before receiving the award, Hodgson was given a 'toast-roast,' a mocking appreciation by five friends and co-workers.

Ted Brandon, Hodgson's press agent from 1993 to

see HODGSON *page 3*

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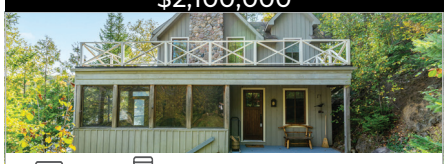
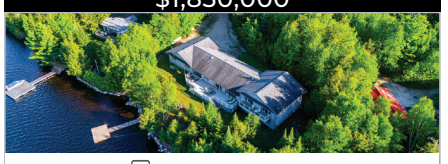


3 X BED | 2 X BATH | MLS# 40624213

KENNISIS LAKE
$2,099,000

5 X BED | 4X BATH | MLS# 40542149

LITTLE REDSTONE LAKE
$1,850,000



5 X BED | 4X BATH | MLS# 40598632

HALIBURTON LAKE
$1,250,000

4 X BED | 3 X BATH | MLS# 40645925

HALIBURTON-BY-THE-LAKE
$875,000

3X BED | 3 X BATH | MLS# 40586358

HALIBURTON LAKE
$799,000

3 X BED | 1 X BATH | MLS# 40645912

GULL RIVER
$759,900

5 X BED | 3 X BATH | MLS# 40638549

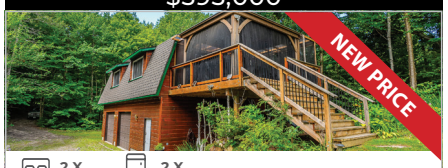
KENNISIS LAKE
$750,000

4 X BED | 2 X BATH | MLS# 40635394

ALGONQUIN HIGHLANDS
$679,900

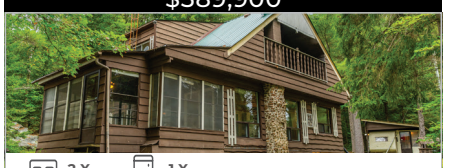
*DEEDED ACCESS TO MAPLE LAKE | MLS# 40655801

ALLEN LAKE - HARCOURT PARK
$595,000



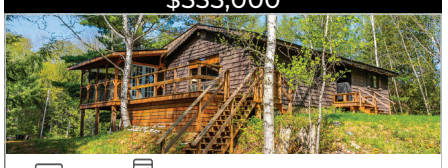
2 X BED | 2 X BATH | MLS# 40634507

BURNT RIVER
$589,900



2 X BED | 1 X BATH | MLS# 40642960

FRED JONES ROAD
$555,000



3 X BED | 2 X BATH | MLS# 40579583

BLACK RIVER/DRAG LAKE
$549,000

3 X BED | 1 X BATH | MLS# 40602565

HIGHLAND GROVE
$474,900

3 X BED | 1 X BATH | MLS# 40611581

PORTAGE LAKE
$464,900

2 X BED | 1 X BATH | MLS# 40597519

CHANDLER POINT
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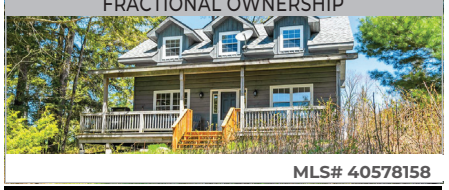
FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP

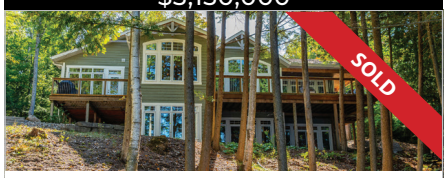


MLS# 40578158

LITTLE REDSTONE LAKE
$995,000

MLS# 40645664

SOYERS LAKE
$3,150,000

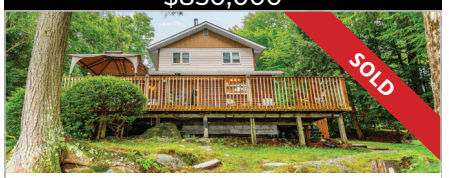


MLS# 40645921

HALLS LAKE AREA
$649,000

MLS# 40612338

KENNISIS LAKE
$850,000



MLS# 40645620

HALIBURTON LAKE
$515,000

MLS# 40605882

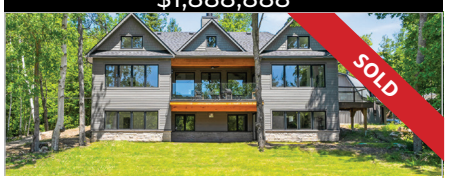
BOB LAKE
$625,000

MLS# 40641458

LITTLE KENNISIS LAKE
$1,350,000

MLS# 40588215

HALIBURTON LAKE
$1,888,888



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- Bethel Road — MLS 40607822 — $191,000 — 24.65 Acres
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